

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Bridgestone A P M Co/Findlay

Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Bridgestone Commits To Improving The Environment

Client Profile:

Bridgestone APM, with locations in Findlay and Upper Sandusky, Ohio, manufactures and markets vibration-isolating rubber for automobiles. The Findlay, Ohio plant was established in 1991 and employs 280 people.

Situation:

Bridgestone APM's customers didn't require the company to be ISO 14001 registered, but the company realized there was every reason to pursue certification. ISO 14001 registration shows a commitment from the company to the environment, and it's just a matter of time before Tier II automotive suppliers are required to be registered. To boost its competitive advantage, the company decided to pursue ISO 14001 certification.

Bridgestone already was registered in ISO 9001 and QS 9000, but the company needed specialized training for the environmental standard registration. The company worked with EISC, Inc. (EISC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, on previous projects and contacted the organization again for assistance with this initiative.

Solution:

EISC helped Bridgestone employees document their processes and organize information, providing a framework for the company to use. EISC taught company employees how to perform and verify every step of the ISO 14001 documentation process. Most importantly, the company and its employees learned how to think about their processes in terms of recycling, and employees are contributing ideas to take that thinking to a new level of commitment. For example, the company now provides expired rubber to a recycling firm. Another employee recommended using a filter to recycle glycol, used in parts assembly at the plant, which allows the chemical to be reused multiple times.

Bridgestone APM's anti-vibration products plant in Findlay became ISO 14001 registered in December 2001, and the company's first surveillance audit in May 2002 was a success. Bridgestone's other anti-vibration plant in Upper Sandusky is preparing for ISO 14001 registration in December 2002. A third plant, also located in Upper Sandusky, which makes foam products, will also eventually become ISO 14001 registered.

The company is now relying on EISC's expertise for some energy management analysis and recommendations, such as retrofit lighting that will reduce energy usage and save the company money at the same time.

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Results:

Achieved ISO 14001 certification.

Prepared to register all facilities to the ISO 14001 standard.

Committed to creating an environmentally sound manufacturing process.

Testimonial:

"We had no experience with ISO 14001. We'd worked with EISC before on other projects, so we already had a partnership. We felt comfortable with EISC and knew they had that capability to offer to us."

Joseph Clark, Corporate Director, Environmental Safety & Health